

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An optical recording medium capable of being recorded and/or reproduced thereon with laser light of 390 to 420 nm, comprising at least:

a supporting substrate;

a recording layer on the supporting substrate, the recording layer containing an organic compound as a major component;

a dielectric layer on the recording layer and

a light-transmitting layer on the dielectric layer, the light-transmitting layer being capable of transmitting laser light with a wavelength of 390 to 420 nm for recording and reproducing information,

wherein the organic compound in the recording layer includes a trimethine cyanine dye that has the minimum value n_{min} of its refractive index n (real part of the complex refractive index) within the range of 370 to 425 nm and has a refractive index n of 1.2 or lower with respect to the wavelength of the recording/reproducing laser light, and the organic compound, when absorbing the laser light, melts or degrades to bring about a change in the refractive index, thereby effecting recording of the information and wherein the trimethine cyanine dye contains a trimethine chain with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the trimethine chain, one of the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of benzoxazole and the other of the two heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of benzoxazole, benzimidazole and indolenine.

Claim 2 (Original): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein, at the wavelength of the reproducing laser light, the melting or the degradation of the organic compound causes an increase in the refractive index n of the organic compound.

Claim 3 (Original): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the organic compound has an extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) of 0.15 or above, with respect to both the wavelength of the recording laser light and the wavelength of the reproducing laser light.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Original): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the trimethine cyanine dye contains a trimethine chain with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the trimethine chain, the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being identical to one another.

Claim 6 (Original): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the recording layer contains, in addition to the organic compound, a quencher.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): An optical recording/reproducing method, comprising the steps of:

providing an optical recording medium comprising at least a supporting substrate; a recording layer on the supporting substrate, the recording layer containing an organic compound as a major component; a dielectric layer on the recording layer; and a light-transmitting layer on the dielectric layer, the light-transmitting layer being capable of

transmitting laser light with a wavelength of 390 to 420 nm for recording and reproducing information, wherein the organic compound in the recording layer includes a trimethine cyanine dye that has the minimum value n_{min} of its refractive index n (real part of the complex refractive index) within the range of 370 to 425 nm and has a refractive index n of 1.2 or lower with respect to the wavelength of the recording/reproducing laser light, and the organic compound, when absorbing the laser light, melts or degrades to bring about a change in the refractive index and wherein the trimethine cyanine dye contains a trimethine chain with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the trimethine chain, one of the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of benzoxazole and the other of the two heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of benzoxazole, benzimidazole and indolenine;

irradiating a recording laser light of 390 to 420 nm onto the optical recording medium from the light-transmitting layer side thereof to effect recording of the information, whereupon the refractive index n of the organic compound with respect to the wavelength of reproducing laser light of 390 to 420 nm is raised in the area irradiated with the recording laser light; and

subsequent to the recording step, irradiating the reproducing laser light of 390 to 420 nm onto the optical recording medium from the light-transmitting layer side thereof to effect reproducing of the information.

Claim 8 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the organic compound in the recording layer has an extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) of 0.15 or above with respect to the wavelength of both the recording and reproducing laser light.

Claim 9 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the dielectric layer has refractive index n_4 (real part of the complex refractive index) of 2 or higher and an extinction coefficient k_4 (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) of 0.2 or lower with respect to the wavelength of the recording/reproducing laser light.

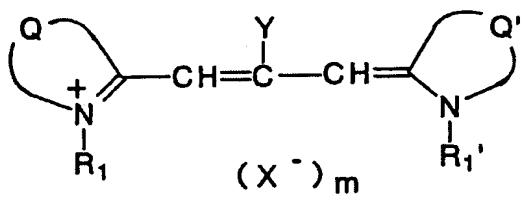
Claim 10 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the minimum value n_{min} of the refractive index n within the range of 370 to 425 nm is 1.1 or lower.

Claim 11 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 10, wherein the minimum value n_{min} of the refractive index n within the range of 370 to 425 nm is 1.0 or lower.

Claim 12 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 8, wherein the extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) is in the range of 0.3 to 0.95 with respect to the wavelength of both the recording and reproducing laser light.

Claim 13 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 12, wherein the extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) is in the range of 0.4 to 0.8 with respect to the wavelength of both the recording and reproducing laser light.

Claim 14 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the trimethine cyanine dye has the following general formula (I):

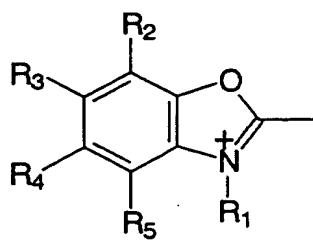


(I)

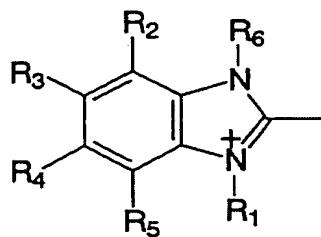
wherein

Y represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl group, or a phenyl group;
 X^- represents an anion, which is a halogen ion, ClO_4^- , BF_4^- , PF_6^- , SbF_6^- , or SCN^- ;
m is 0 or 1;
the Q-containing ring has the following formula (A), and the Q'-containing ring has one of the following formulae (A), (B) or (C):

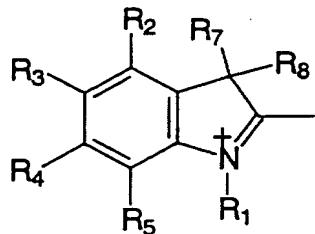
(A)



(B)



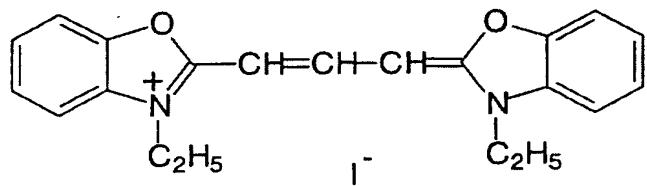
(C)



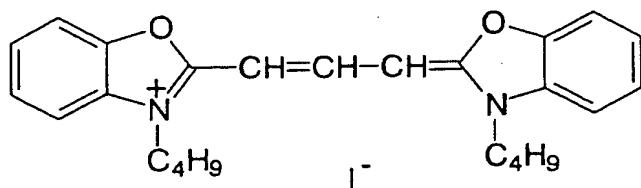
wherein R₁ is a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms; R₂, R₃, R₄ and R₅ may or may not be identical to one another and each independently represent a hydrogen atom, alkyl group, nitro group, alkoxy group, or a halogen atom; R₆ represents a methyl or ethyl group; R₇ and R₈ may or may not be identical to one another and each independently represent a methyl or ethyl group.

Claim 15 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 14, wherein the trimethine cyanine dye is selected from the group consisting of

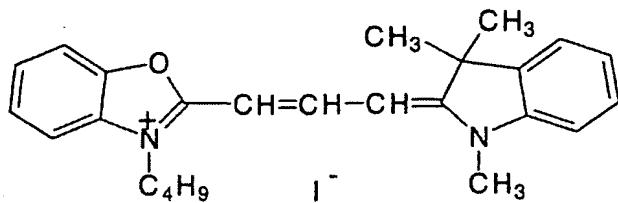
AA-1



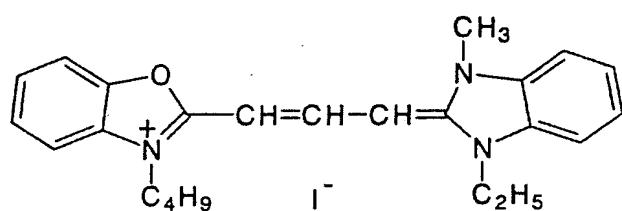
AA-2



AC-1



AB-1



Claim 16 (New): The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the recording layer and the supporting substrate are adjacent to each other.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

The specification has been amended to correct an obvious error, as supported, for example, at page 3, lines 9-14.

Claim 1 has been amended to make explicit what is believed to have been at least previously implicit, i.e., that the claimed optical recording medium is capable of being recorded and/or reproduced thereon with laser light of 390-420 nm, as supported, for example, in original Claim 7. Claim 1 has been further amended by deleting the superfluous "selected from the group consisting of".

New Claims 8-16 have been added. The new claims are supported in the specification as follows: Claim 8 at page 7, second paragraph; Claim 9 at page 8, third full paragraph; Claims 10 and 11 at the paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15; Claims 12 and 13 at the paragraph bridging pages 15 and 16; Claim 14 at the paragraph bridging pages 17 and 18 through the second paragraph of page 20; Claim 15 at page 23 (dyes AA-1 and AA-2) and page 24 (dyes AC-1 and AB-1); and Claim 16 in, for example, the Figure.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 1-3 and 5-16 are now pending in the application.